
Title: History of Richard 5

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Zel looked towards Richard, and then to the paladin, grinning from ear to ear as he built up a slight tension before speaking. "Richard, this is Sir Thomas of the Silver Serpent, aide to Lord Dupre and trainer of the Royal Guard." As noted by his title, you may have guessed why I brought him here... consider this your birthday present for the next 3 years." The old man chuckled as he saw Richard's jaw drop in shock, watching as the boy stared from Thomas to himself, completely speechless.

"Uncle Zel! You're the best! I'll show everyone that I can be the best warrior ever! You won't be disappointed! Thank you! Thank you!" Richard spoke frantically as Thomas chuckled in the background at the boy's sudden burst of energy.

"It won't be easy Richard; training for squires is three years, a long time for a boy such as yourself." Thomas spoke in a serious tone, eyeing the child with strict eyes that betrayed his former humor.

"I will be the best ever, you'll see!" Richard stood upright with a childish look of seriousness on his

face, causing both the old man and the paladin to break out in sudden laughter.

“By the gods above, Richard, you’ve passed one year of training in half the time. It’s like you know everything already... Has Zel been teaching you combat and fighting techniques behind my back? No no...what am I saying, Zel only battles beggars with floating coins.” Thomas chuckled and eyed Richard with a modicum of respect.

“Yes Milord! Thank you Milord!” Richard barked the words out as he continued to spar with the training dummy, every strike becoming more and more accurate.

Richard smiled at his efforts, even he himself was surprised at the rate which he had learned, he reacted out of instinct, and combat awareness seemed to flow from every fiber of his being. He had even been invited to the youth tournament being held in Jhelom, a rigorous battlefield in which the most promising warriors of the realm were pitted against each other while proud parents and teachers looked on in admiration. He had begun to train harder as of late, pushing his abilities to their peak, he wanted to impress Zel and Thomas; he wanted to make his family proud.

The dusty city of Jhelom began to fill with anxious spectators; the rough wooden stands of the Arena sagged under the tremendous weight being placed upon them.

Merchant's flooded the streets, selling wooden play swords and various trinkets brought back from less than exotic destinations. Sweat and heat could be felt by all as fifty young warriors suited up in enforced leather armor and semi-dulled swords. The crowd cheered as the children stepped out into the center of the ring, some boys petitioning the crowds in favor of themselves, while others stood silently focused on the task ahead. One by one the Tournament master pitted the boys up against each other, purposely creating uneven matches to filter out the less prominent children.

"Richard of Moonglow, you will be facing Jarrod of Britain. Step into the arena now and begin on the count of ten." The Tournament Master watched as the two boys stepped into the Arena, focused even amongst the frantic sounds of the cheering audience. The two boy's eyes locked in a defiant embrace, studying each other for any noticeable weakness, making notes of each slight motion their opponents made. "TEN!" the Tournament master shouted into the air, as a roar of cheering rose through the

stands of spectators.

Richard began to slowly
circle his opponent,
keeping his sword raised
in a defensive posture,
beckoning the other boy
to make the first move.

Jarrold slowly began to
move in, taking the
needed offensive against

Richard, the circle
between them began to
shrink, and eventually the
boys were within swords
length of each other. The
blades of the children
clashed with a resonating
clang, sending renewed
cheers up amongst the
crowd, beckoning on the
grand spectacle. Richard
veered left, barely
avoiding Jarrold's strike,
gaining a slight advantage
position wise over his
recovering opponent.

Richard quickly came
around and lunged towards
Jarrold's midsection,
barely missing his target
as Jarrold danced away
from the strike. Richard
eyed his opponent once
more; the tracks of his
mind began to play,
piecing together
information and
weaknesses of Jarrold's
style. Seeing his opponent
veer left barely avoiding
Jarrold's strike, gaining a
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tracks of his mind began
to play, piecing together
information and
weaknesses of Jarrold's
style. Seeing his opponent
veer left several times
at his strikes, Richard

approached Jarrod with deathly grace, keeping the distance between them close, pushed himself to the right of Jarrod.

With a sudden motion, Richard faked an attack directed to the right, and as Jarrod began to veer towards the left, rebounded with a quick strike to Jarrod's left shoulder, causing a trickle of blood to spill, ending the short lived match.

"The winner of the match is Richard!" The tournament masters voice became repetitive as he announced the winner of the duels, seeing the dull blue eyed boy from Moonglow best even the finest bred children of the realm. As the day went on, few nobles were left in the grandstands as the final bout was ready, citizens and Moonglow townsfolk who had came with his uncle cheered loudly as a sweating and tired Richard walked into the arena once more.

"The final bout of the tournament shall be between our two most skilled competitors, send your cheers out to these boys for such determination in defeating such skilled and worthy opponents!" The crowd cheered and flailed loudly as the tournament master raised his hands once more for silence. "But as you know, only one can come out the winner, Richard of Moonglow and Vorid of Minoc, step into the arena for your final match!"

As Vorid stepped into the

arena, Richard noticed a distinct familiarity in the boy, a certain aspect that stirred his mind with futile thoughts that would not surface. All that was known is Vorid was a brutal fighter, the child had killed two of his opponents during rather mysterious accidents, impaling one on his blade as he supposedly tripped, and slicing another's jugular as his blade veered too far away from its target. Richard knew he may not live if he lost this match; the sense of dread welcomed him, as if it were a friend visiting after a long hiatus.